

May 28, 2019

## RABIES ALERT ISSUED FOR ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA



**Contact:**

Media Desk  
850-595-6500, ext. 6000

**Pensacola, Fla. –** The Florida Department of Health in Escambia County has issued a rabies alert for the Bayou Chico area of Escambia County, Florida. The alert is in response to a report of a positive test result for rabies in a cat on May 25, 2019, which follows a positive test on a raccoon found in the same area in January 2019.

All residents and visitors in Escambia County should be aware that rabies is present in the wild animal population and domestic animals are at risk if not vaccinated. The public is asked to maintain a heightened awareness that rabies is active in Escambia County. Alerts are designed to increase awareness to the public, but they should not give a false sense of security to areas that have not been named as under an alert.

The rabies alert will last for 60 days and covers the area in southern Escambia County, surrounding Bayou Chico, that lies south of West Jackson Street between New Warrington Road and Pace Boulevard.

An animal with rabies could infect other wild animals or domestic animals that have not been vaccinated against rabies. All domestic animals should be vaccinated against rabies and humans should avoid all wildlife contact, especially with raccoons, bats, and foxes. Rabies is a disease of the nervous system and is usually fatal to warm-blooded animals and to humans. The only treatment for human exposure to rabies is rabies-specific immune globulin and rabies immunization. Appropriate treatment started soon after the exposure will protect an exposed person from the disease.

Residents and visitors are advised to take the following precautions:

- Vaccinate pets against rabies and keep vaccinations up to date.
- Keep pets under direct supervision so they do not come in contact with wild animals. If a pet is bitten by a wild animal, seek veterinary assistance for the animal immediately and contact Escambia County Animal Services at 850-595-0097.
- Call animal control services to remove any stray animals from your neighborhood.
- Bring in pet food at night and secure trash cans with fasteners, or place trash containers in the garage, so they do not attract wild or stray animals.
- Never adopt wild animals or bring them into your home.
- Teach children never to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly.
- Prevent bats from entering living quarters or occupied spaces in homes, churches, schools, and other similar areas, where they might come in contact with people and pets.
- Persons who have been bitten or scratched by wild or domestic animals should seek medical attention and report the injury to the Florida Department of Health in Escambia County at 850-595-6700.

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**About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board, works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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